

ROGERS REPORTS:

U.S.-Soviet Relations: Tragic Irony

By WARREN ROGERS

WASHINGTON: Foreign policy is rife with the element of Greek tragedy—the character flaw and the inexorable tug of events toward an unhappy conclusion despite the best efforts of the principals to work out a satisfactory denouement.

Consider the current postures of both the Soviet Union and the United States. Both swear, loudly and often, that they want nothing in this world but justice and peace. Concretely, for years, they have been edging cautiously toward a rapprochement—a burying of the hatchet in the hope at last of getting along in genuine peaceful coexistence.

Time after time, each acts or refrains from acting in a manner which gives substance to its asserted altruism. The delicate diplomatic dance which averted World War III in the 1962 Cuba missile crisis is the most noteworthy example. There have been other cases in which direct confrontations have been avoided—by the United States in the matter of United Nations dues, and by the Russians on a number of occasions in South-east Asia.

Along the line in the Cold War, both sides have learned the folly of trying to bluff. The United States took its licking in the Hungarian revolt. It implied or let the Hungarians infer, that it would come to



— ROGERS

the aid of those unhappy people if they tried to throw off the Communist yoke. When they did, we had to stand by in agonizing helplessness because to intervene probably would have touched off World War III. In the Kremlin, they had to eat crow when the late President Kennedy called their bluff on the Cuban missiles. Again, restraint prevented World War III.

Now, however, we are confronted by paradoxical behavior by both the United States and Russia. At a time when both are loudly professing to seek a rapprochement, each is simultaneously guilty of provocative mischief in the background.

In Moscow the other day, celebrating the 48th anniversary of their revolution, the Russians trotted out nuclear devices they said could be put into orbit to be fired on an earth target at will. It is mystifying that they not only did that much but also bragged about it at length in a commentary by Tass, the government news agency.

It has been only a few short months since the world hailed the U. S.-Soviet agreement to ban such gadgets in space. A convenient explanation would be that the Soviet's heavy-handed threat was directed at Red China, but the United States certainly is justified in putting uneasy questions to Moscow about its precise intentions.

On the other hand, America's Central Intelligence Agency, has just caused to be published "The Penkovsky Papers." These are the memoirs, certified here as genuine, of Oleg Penkovsky, a Soviet colonel of intelligence who was tried, convicted and executed last year as a spy for the United States and Britain.

Granted, foreign policy is a never-never land. But this is a lot to take. It is rather like shaking hands with your neighbor on his front lawn while your kids run around back and throw rocks through his kitchen window.

CPYRIGHT

Hearst Headline Service